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Good morning, Chairman Lawlor, Chairman McDonald, and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Laura Baldini and it's a pleasure to appear before you today. I appreciate your consideration of my Superior Court judicial nomination and I look forward to answering any questions that you may have for me. I would like to thank Governor M. Jodi Rell for the honor of being nominated to become a Superior Court judge and would like to congratulate the other nominees.

I applied to become a Superior Court judge because I wanted a job that incorporated two things that are an integral part of my life: practicing law and serving my community. I have been a practicing attorney for almost thirteen years now, but I have held law-related employment throughout the past twenty four years.

I have been incredibly blessed to have worked with, and against, some of the best attorneys in Connecticut and throughout the country. I began my legal career as an associate in the law firm of Ohrenstein & Brown in New York City. I worked there for two years before I became an associate with Updike, Kelly & Spellacy, PC, a law firm here in Hartford. Most of the work I did at these firms was civil litigation work, mostly personal injury, insurance coverage and defense work and cases involving contractual and statutory disputes.

I worked at Updike, Kelly & Spellacy, PC for five years and left the firm in 2003 to open my own law practice at time when most people would consider unwise; I had two children under the age of two and a half and I had a solid legal career already in place. I started my own firm because I wanted the opportunity to run my own business, take some chances and expand my level of legal expertise. I have run my own law firm for seven years now and I have built a practice that focuses on civil litigation, real estate and legal consulting work.

I am proud to say that I have had a rewarding and fulfilling legal career to date. I've handled a wide variety of cases involving many areas of the law and have represented people, both plaintiffs and defendants, from all ethnic, economic and

cultural backgrounds. I have appeared in almost every Superior Court in this state as well as the State's Appellate Court. I've appeared in the United States District and Bankruptcy Courts and the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit where I was admitted last year. I have, either as sole counsel or as co-counsel, tried both jury and nonjury cases to conclusion in Superior Court and in the United States District Court. Some of the cases I have handled were cases of first impression.

While most of my legal experience has been on the civil side, I do have some criminal court experience. After obtaining my undergraduate degree from Yale University in 1992, I worked for a year before I attended Seton Hall University School of Law, at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office in New York as a Trial Preparation Assistant. There, I worked closely with Assistant District Attorneys helping them to prepare felony and misdemeanor cases for trial. I also served as an interpreter for Spanish-speaking witnesses and crime victims.

My strongest motivation for becoming a Superior Court judge is my desire to use my legal and organizational skills to serve my community. I was born in Connecticut and I've lived almost my whole life here and I think it's a great place to live and to raise a family. I am proud to have my husband of over 11 years, Matt, here with me today along with my sons, Michael, Christopher and Thomas. Community service is an important part of my life having been brought up by parents that encouraged service to others. This value remains important to me and to my family today.

I presently serve as President of the Foundation for the Advancement of Catholic Schools which provides tuition assistance to poor and underserved children in the Archdiocese of Hartford, primarily to children in the cities of Hartford, New Haven and Waterbury. I also serve as the Vice President to the Yale Club and Scholarship Foundation and as a Director of the John G. Martin Foundation.

I see the position of a Superior Court judge as one that requires someone with legal experience, leadership skills and the appropriate temperament to work with people from all walks of life. I believe that I have the requisite legal experience to become a Superior Court judge and the requisite maturity and integrity to handle tough situations in an appropriate, fair and rational manner.

I'm truly honored to have been given this opportunity by Governor Rell and I have personally assured her that she will not be disappointed by my work if confirmed. I give the same pledge to you. I appreciate your time and attention, and I look forward to answering any questions that you may have. Thank you.